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DEM's WALDEN RESERVATION EXPANDS

CONCORD – Bob Durand, Secretary of Environmental Affairs joined recording artist Don Henley and Peter C. Webber, Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Management (DEM), along with other state and local officials in celebrating the Goose Pond land acquisition today at Walden Pond State Reservation.

The 26-acre Goose Pond parcel abuts Walden Pond State Reservation. The property is situated within the historic landscape known as Walden Woods, made famous through the writings of Henry David Thoreau, who made numerous references to his experiences at Goose Pond in his book, *Walden*.

“It is not often that we have an opportunity to acquire a parcel with such environmental, historical and literary significance,” said Secretary Durand. “The Goose Pond parcel, frequented by Henry David Thoreau because of its natural beauty, is now part of his beloved Walden, and will be for all time, thanks to the hard work by everyone involved in this project.”

Through the land acquisition, Goose Pond is now part of the Walden Pond State Reservation. The land was acquired by the state's Division of Capital Asset Management (DCAM) on DEM's behalf, and will be managed by DEM for passive recreation and conservation.

“The land surrounding Goose Pond in Walden Woods was one of Henry David Thoreau's favorite destinations. He spent a great deal of time here, immersed in nature, drawing inspiration from this beautiful setting, which he chronicled in his Journal,” said Henley, who founded the Walden Woods Project. “Today's announcement by Secretary Durand represents a major step forward in the ongoing efforts to preserve Walden Woods, one of our nation's most important historic and ecological treasures. Located in the heart of Walden Woods and abutting other protected land, this 26-acre site will now be set aside in its natural state for future generations to enjoy, as Thoreau did in his time.

“The progress that has been made in the preservation of Walden Woods is attributable, in large part, to the strength of partnerships between the state and federal governments, the Walden Woods Project, the surrounding communities and local land trusts. All have reason to celebrate today’s announcement,” Henley added.

The Town of Concord previously owned the parcel and at one time considered the land as a potential site for the town’s Municipal Light Plant. DEM, however, realized the significance of the property and the importance of providing for its permanent protection from development. Town officials and DEM developed an agreement, whereby the town received a comparable parcel of land from the state Department of Corrections near the Route 2 rotary, upon which it subsequently built its Municipal Light Plant.

“Goose Pond was considered a special retreat by Mr. Thoreau in the mid-1800s and we are delighted that it is now a part of Walden Pond State Reservation and protected for generations to come,” said Commissioner Webber.

“This part of our nation is valued heritage, historically and environmentally. We are grateful for the commitment of the Town of Concord, Secretary Durand and Don Henley for their work on behalf of the protection of Goose Pond, Walden Woods and the Walden Pond State Reservation.” said state Sen. Susan Fargo.

“It gives me great pleasure to know that this historic landscape Henry David Thoreau knew so well will now be permanently protected,” said state Rep. Cory Atkins. “This parcel will add greatly to the historic resources already within the Walden Pond State Reservation.”

“The Town of Concord is enormously pleased on the completion of this longstanding transfer,” said Concord Selectman Richmond Edes. “The Goose Pond parcel is now in the hands of the Commonwealth and the entire project represents a welcome cooperation between the state, the town and volunteers.”

The Goose Pond property supports a variety of plant and animal life. Wildlife such as muskrats, shore birds, and assorted frogs and turtles prefer the mudflats of shallow water ponds not present within the reservation boundaries until today.

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